

Palisades Community Bible Church

Online Sunday School

Was Judas Foretold In The Old Testament?

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Perhaps the single greatest miracle the entire Holy Scriptures is the number of prophecies fulfilled by Jesus' first coming. The fact that Jesus fulfilled over 390 prophecies, which were made hundreds of years before His birth, is miraculous on the scale of the creation of the first man and woman.

I was sharing this fact with a Jewish fellow, and he scoffed.

How would you respond to someone who said it would have been easy for someone to fake fulfilling the prophecies, so there's no way of trusting the New Testament?

I didn't have a scholarly reply, so I simply asked him how he could account for the prophecies from HIS scriptures foretelling the exact number of lashes Jesus received, or that Jesus would dismiss His spirit, rather than dying from the crucifixion. I asked how he could account for Roman soldiers NOT breaking Jesus' legs so that He would die before sunset, though they did it to those on crosses next to him. I asked how he could account for the splitting of the massive, heavily woven curtain in the tabernacle that separated the Holy of Holies at the moment His spirit left Him. I asked him how he could account for Jesus rising from the dead and appearing to over 150 people....

He interrupted; "So, there are prophecies that were fulfilled that nobody could fake?"

I sure hope that conversation keeps him awake many nights!!

So, with the amazing fulfillment of prophecies surrounding Jesus' earthly, mortal experience, let's look at some that are not preached upon very much. They are the prophecies of **Judas Iscariot**, found in the Old Testament. I know, I know; "Judas! Boo! Hiss!"

As much as we all want to hate on Judas, he was actually a very important part of Jesus' work. We don't want to emulate his nefarious behaviors, but we need to respect and understand Judas' role in God's divine plan for taking away the sin of the world.

Understanding The Importance Of Prophecy

To truly understand Judas' role in the Messiah's earthly work, we need to understand that Jesus' death HAD TO HAPPEN. We need to understand that the prophecies had to be fulfilled....it was GOD, the Father's plan. Jesus said many times that He and the Father are ONE.... "If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father." Jesus could NOT act, in any way, contrary to the plans that had been laid down since history began. Jesus' entire earthly ministry was the complete, accurate, perfect fulfillment of hundreds of prophecies.

John 14: Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us." 9 Jesus replied, "Philip, I have been with you all this time, and still, you do not know Me? Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words I say to you, I do not speak on My own. Instead, it is the Father dwelling in Me, performing His works."

Why is the fulfillment of prophecy so critical? In short, it's how God is wired. God is a god of truth, balance, structure, integrity and completeness. Prophecies, and their fulfillment, are important for God to demonstrate WHO HE IS to mankind. Indeed, most of the Jewish traditions and celebrations are REMEMBRANCES of God's miraculous fulfillment of prophecies. God instructed the Jews to remember Him, partly because they were scattered among many nations and they would be lured away by the gods of non-Jewish peoples:

2 Kings 17 "In the twelfth year of King Ahaz's reign over Judah, Hoshea son of Elah became king over Israel. He reigned in Samaria for nine years. 2 He did evil in the sight of the Lord, but not to the same degree as the Israelite kings who preceded him. 3 King Shalmaneser of Assyria marched up to attack him; so Hoshea became his subject and paid him tribute. 4 The king of Assyria discovered that Hoshea was planning a revolt. Hoshea had sent messengers to

King So (the king's name was "So") of Egypt and had not sent his annual tribute to the king of Assyria. So, the king of Assyria, arrested him and imprisoned him. 5 The king of Assyria marched through the whole land. He attacked Samaria and besieged it for three years. 6 In the ninth year of Hoshea's reign, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the people of Israel to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, along the Habor (the river of Gozan), and in the cities of the Medes.

A Summary of Israel's Sinful History

7 This happened because the Israelites sinned against the Lord their God, who brought them up from the land of Egypt and freed them from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshiped other gods; 8 they observed the practices of the nations whom the Lord had driven out from before them, and followed the example of the kings of Israel. 9 The Israelites said things about the Lord their God that were not right. They built high places in all their towns, from watchtower to fortified city. 10 They set up sacred pillars and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree. 11 They burned incense on all the high places just like the nations whom the Lord had driven away before them did. Their evil practices made the Lord angry. 12 They worshiped the disgusting idols in blatant disregard of the Lord's command.

So, the rituals, remembrances and traditions instituted by God for the Jews were an important part of reminding the Jews that their God is a living and powerful God! Unfortunately, the Jews weren't always so good at this:

Judges 2: 10 "After that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, another generation grew up who knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel."

Prophecy fulfillment is also critical because so many **HAVE YET TO BE FULFILLED**. If we see how carefully God has laid out the details of the **FIRST** coming of His Son, and we see how they have been fulfilled, we can trust in the details of Jesus' **SECOND COMING!** Indeed, many of these prophecies are unfolding during our lifetimes.

So, let's take a look at how Judas, a major actor in Jesus' ministry, had been foretold. The New Testament marks how the Old Testament prophesied Judas (not necessarily by name) and what he would do.

The First Prophecy of Judas

Let's look at the fulfillment., then we'll look at the prophecy. This is a familiar passage, but read the part carefully that pertains to the "lifting of the heel and the betrayal;

John 13: 18 "It was now just before the Passover Feast, and Jesus knew that His hour had come to leave this world and return to the Father. Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the very end. 2 The evening meal was underway, and the devil had already put into the heart of Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.

3 Jesus knew that the Father had delivered all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was returning to God. 4 So He got up from the supper, laid aside His outer garments, and wrapped a towel around His waist. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel that was around Him.

6 He came to Simon Peter, who asked Him, "Lord, are You going to wash my feet?" 7 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." 8 "Never shall You wash my feet!" Peter told Him. Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with Me." 9 "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well!"

10 Jesus told him, "Whoever has already bathed needs only to wash his feet, and he will be completely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." 11 For He knew who would betray Him. That is why He said, "Not all of you are clean."

12 When Jesus had washed their feet and put on His outer garments, He reclined with them again and asked, "Do you know what I have done for you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and rightly so, because I am. 14 So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example so that you should do as I have done for you.

16 Truly, truly, I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 If you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”

Jesus Predicts His Betrayal

18 “I am not speaking about all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But this is to fulfill the Scripture: ‘The one who shares My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.’ 19 I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it comes to pass, you will believe that I am He. 20 Truly, truly, I tell you, whoever receives the one I send receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives the One who sent Me.”

21 After Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit and testified, “Truly, truly, I tell you, one of you will betray Me.” 22 The disciples looked at one another, perplexed as to which of them He meant. 23 One of His disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was reclining at His side. 24 So Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus which one He was talking about. 25 Leaning back against Jesus, he asked, “Lord, who is it?”

26 Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I give this morsel after I have dipped it.” Then He dipped the morsel and gave it to Judas, son of Simon Iscariot. 27 And when Judas had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Then Jesus said to Judas, “What you are about to do, do quickly.”

28 But no one at the table knew why Jesus had said this to him. 29 Since Judas kept the money bag, some thought that Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the feast, or to give something to the poor. 30 As soon as he had received the morsel, Judas went out into the night.

This was prophesied by King David:

Psalm 41: 9 “Even my close friend whom I trusted, the one who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.”

See John 13:18 in the above. The term; “Lifted up his heel against me” is a metaphor of a horse lifting up his hind leg and kicking, or attacking, his master.

Psalm 41: 9 is believed to be a reference by David to Ahithophel. Though once a friend a trusted counselor, who shared meals with the king, Ahithophel betrayed

David by joining his son, Absalom in rebellion against his father, King David. Ahithophel's advice to defeat David was rejected, and seeing his looming demise by David, hanged himself. After Ahithophel gave Absalom his advice about defeating his father, the king...

2 Samuel 17: 5 "But Absalom said, "Summon also Hushai the Arkite, so we can hear what he has to say as well." 6 When Hushai came to him, Absalom said, "Ahithophel has given this advice. Should we do what he says? If not, give us your opinion."

7 Hushai replied to Absalom, "The advice Ahithophel has given is not good this time. 8 You know your father and his men; they are fighters, and as fierce as a wild bear robbed of her cubs. Besides, your father is an experienced fighter; he will not spend the night with the troops. 9 Even now, he is hidden in a cave or some other place. If he should attack your troops first, whoever hears about it will say, 'There has been a slaughter among the troops who follow Absalom.' 10 Then even the bravest soldier, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will melt with fear, for all Israel knows that your father is a fighter and that those with him are brave.

Judas also ate bread with Jesus in the Upper Room, betrayed Him to his enemies, and later hanged himself. Both these characters KNEW they had betrayed their KING!

Later, in the Garden, Jesus prayed. In that prayer, Jesus says;

John 17: 12-13 "While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled."

The Next Prophecy Of Judas

Peter was speaking to a group of new Christians in Jerusalem. His purpose was to facilitate the selection of a replacement for Judas. He began with some context:

Acts 1: 15 In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) 16 and said, "Brothers and sisters, the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David

concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus. 17 He was one of our number and shared in our ministry.”

18 (With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. 19 Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

20 “For,” said Peter, “it is written in the Book of Psalms: “May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it, and, may another take his place of leadership.’

21 Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, 22 beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.”

23 So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. 24 Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen 25 to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.” 26 Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

This careful and prayerful replacement of Judas reveals two things; a) the job Judas had of managing the finances of the ministry was extremely important, and b) Judas had served faithfully up until the appointed time for Satan to enter into him. (I, personally, believe there is a third aspect of this particular job of managing the money; this is a job that is vulnerable to temptation. A sin in this office of responsibility affects many people, so Satan has a lot to gain by corrupting the one who holds the money pouch.)

Peter’s comments on the acts of Judas reveal a prophecy found in:

Psalm 109: 8 “May his days be few; may another take his place of leadership.”

Further, as David wrote a curse to be placed on his enemy, it foretells the fate, also, of Judas’ property (note the description in Acts 1: 18-19, above):

Psalm 69: 25 May their place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in their tents.

Judas acquired a field with the money given to him for betraying Jesus (perhaps the Jewish leaders bought a field in Judas's name with the 30 pieces of silver he had returned to them; Matt 27:3–10). Not only did he hang himself there, and fall headlong and burst open, on its grounds, it was also used as a burial ground for strangers; certainly, a desolate place where no one would dwell.

What Are We To Learn, Here?

Are you getting the picture of God's consistent, repeated pattern of telling us what he is going to do, doing it in a way that only GOD could do it, and then, telling us to remember His power? (Prophecy, miraculous fulfillment, followed by faithfulness)

God has another paradigm; an oft repeated process: God is forgiving and long-suffering when it comes to His people. But, he has a limit. There is a point at which God gives stubborn, wicked, willfully sinful people over to their own desires, and He withdraws His hand of blessing and protection.

Indeed, these Old Testament prophecies are David's writings of the enemies he suffered in his own day. David, "a man after God's own heart," was an important author of history and prophecy. He prayed for curses upon those who opposed the King of Israel. In the same way that David was afflicted by treachery from within his inner circle of trusted companions, so was Jesus.

Just as Judas opposed Jesus, even **Israel** rejected their King and opposed Him. Israel is on record for persecuting and killing God's prophets and messengers, to the point of crucifying the very Son of God, Immanuel (God with us).

Therefore, Judas, the nation of Israel.....and, sadly, America...have set themselves against Jesus. In so doing, they are rejecting the blessings that Jesus brings them, and are reaping the curses that come with opposing Him.

Any nation that actively rejects the Gospel can presently be described as God's enemy, and thus, fits the descriptions of those worthy of the curses David prayed would be visited upon the enemies of Israel's King.

Let's close with:

Romans 11: 1 “I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don’t you know what Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed to God against Israel: 3 “Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me”? 4 And what was God’s answer to him? “I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” 5 So too, at the present time, there is a remnant chosen by grace. 6 And if by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

7 What then? What the people of Israel sought so earnestly they did not obtain? The elect among them did, but the others were hardened, 8 as it is written:

“God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that could not see and ears that could not hear, to this very day.” **

9 And David says: “May their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them. 10 May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever.”

11 Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. 12 But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their full inclusion bring!

** It may be noted, here, that God gave them over to a spirit of stupor. They hated the truth and loved lies and false gods. After God’s many efforts, and their rejection, He gave them over to their sins, that they may reap the curses that follow so abundantly. This is repeated in:

2 Thessalonians 2:12 “and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.”

God has prepared for every human on the planet a place at His banquet table. But, He WILL NOT drag anybody up to it and shove their face into the food. He has given you free will, and the consequences; they are the reward for your choices.